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ABSTRACT

This paper describes an innovative approach to teaching a college course on self-management/self-control. Following a brief background statement on the history and applications of self-management, as well as the deficits of traditional self-management instruction, multimodal therapy (Lazarus, 1976, 1981) is discussed as the conceptual framework for a new approach to teaching self-management. The remainder of the paper presents the course outline including the statement of purpose (to provide students with an understanding and application of the principles of multimodal therapy to self-management), and the five main areas of focus: (1) the historical development of psychology as a science; (2) multimodal psychology; (3) multimodal assessment; (4) multimodal problem identification; and (5) multimodal self-management techniques. A 30-item reference list is also included. (MCF)

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ABSTRACT

Multimodal Self-Management: An Holistic Approach to Teaching Self-Improvement

The paper describes an innovative approach to teaching a college course on self-management/self-control. In contrast to most courses in the field, the one detailed here provides an organizational and conceptual framework in which self-change can occur. Comprehensive self-assessment and treatment are conducted according to the principles of Multimodal Therapy, developed by Arnold Lazarus, assuring a systematic, integrative approach. The course teaches students how to assess and prioritize their problems, select the best self-treatment technique, and overcome inertia. Specific assessment devices related to each modality are detailed in the paper, as well as the appropriate corresponding self-management strategy. Extensive references are provided allowing for in depth perusal of the self-management methods employed.

Multimodal Self-Management: An Holistic Approach to Teaching Self-Improvement

Background

As Thoresen and Mahoney (1974) have pointed out, techniques for teaching self-management/self-control have been recorded for well over 2000 years. Because such methods were often part of religious or philosophical movements, however, they were not well received generally. Within recent years, though, a scientific technology of self-management has clearly emerged and is receiving widespread attention in both the popular and professional literature.

The systematic study of self-control received its impetus from the techniques cited by Skinner (1953) in his classic work, Science and Human Behavior. The topic received further attention and elaboration by Ferster (1965), Goldiamond (1965), Bandura (1969), Stuart (1970) and Marston and McFall (1971). Most of these early approaches to self-help emphasized the principles of operant conditioning grounded in radical behaviorism, but as the participants in the field expanded, it became much less monolithic. In the 70's vicarious learning came to occupy a more central role, particularly cognitive-behavior change strategies. Thus social-learning theory became an acceptable theoretical base, although some leading researchers (Kanfer, 1975; Watson and Tharp, 1981) have taken a more eclectic position.

Application

There is ample evidence that self-management approaches

within a clinical setting have effected substantive change in people's lives (Rehm & Marston, 1968; Mahoney, Moura, & Wade, 1973; Rosen, 1977). There is also increasing evidence that self-management techniques taught outside traditional clinical settings, as for example in college courses, have had considerable success (Barrera & Glasgow, 1976; Payne & Wundenberg, 1978; Worthington, 1979; Watson and Tharp, 1981). Menges and Dobroski (1977) concluded that, "The studies . . . provide some evidence that the subject matter of behavioral psychology can be taught at a level which facilitates successful self-modification projects" (p. 172).

The present writer has been teaching a self-management course at Marist College since 1978. Prior to Fall 1982, it had been structured similar to other courses described in the literature. An eclectic approach that taught a variety of self-change techniques was its general orientation, and while extremely well received by students, it was in need of revision.

Deficits

The problem perceived with this course, as well as with others in the field, was that it lacked a conceptual and organizational framework in which self-change could occur. Without such a framework comprehensive assessment was missing, integration lacking, and the choice of intervention techniques caprious. Also there was no system for determining which problem to address first, which technique had the best chance of being successful,

nor how to deal with self-inertia. In effect, a new type of self-management course was called for--one whose approach was holistic, conceptually sound and grounded in empirical research. Such an approach to change is provided by the Multimodal Therapy of Arnold Lazarus (1976, 1981).

Multimodal Therapy

Lazarus formulated the multimodal model of treatment after his systematic follow-up studies of therapy cases revealed that relapse occurred far more frequently than practitioners realized. Upon investigating the reason for this, it became clear that most people in therapy failed to acquire a significantly broad range of coping skills, which would enable them to deal effectively with life's demands. It appeared that most therapeutic methods were often singular in their approach to the definition of the problem (basic anxiety, poor self-concept, repressed hostility, etc.) and in their treatment techniques (insight, catharsis, relaxation, etc.). In place of a unimodal orientation towards assessment and treatment, Lazarus has argued for a multimodal approach which focuses on seven modalities: behavior, affect, sensory, imagery, cognitive, interpersonal and drugs (biological). Successful therapy necessitates that each of these human dimensions be attended to in an integrative, holistic manner.

The principles of Multimodal Therapy have been applied to diverse populations in a wide variety of settings (O'Keefe and Castaldo, 1981; O'Keefe, 1981; Brunell & Young, 1982). In the

area of self-management, Nieves (1978) has written a multimodal planning and guidance manual for minority students. However, no formal college course on self-management structured and taught in accordance with the multimodal model has been discussed in the literature. The remainder of this paper describes such a course.

Course Title: Applied Psychology: Multimodal Self-Management

Purpose: To provide the student with a thorough understanding of multimodal psychology, to teach the application of multimodal principles and techniques to self-management, and to encourage practice in the use of these principles and techniques. It is expected that the present and future functioning of the student will thereby be enhanced.

Course Outline:

I. Historical Development of Psychology as a Science

- A. General Roots of Psychology
  1. Philosophy
  2. Physiology
  3. Experimental Methodology
- B. Development of Applied Psychology
- C. Self-Control/Self-Management "Movement"

II. Multimodal Psychology

- A. Historical Development
  1. "Narrow-band" Behavior Therapy
  2. "Broad-spectrum" Behavior Therapy
  3. Multimodal Behavior Therapy
- B. Multimodal Principles
  1. BASIC ID
  2. Applications
- C. Multimodal Self-Management

III. Multimodal Assessment

- A. General Principles/Techniques
  1. Functional Analysis
  2. Interactive Process
  3. Structural Profile
  4. Second-order BASIC ID
  5. "Firing Order"

B. Values/Goal Clarification
   1. Principles
   2. Techniques/Exercises
      Self Interview for Goal Clarification - Schmidt, 1976

IV. Multimodal Problem Identification

A. Behavior - B
   1. Principles
   2. Techniques/Exercises
      Self-Rating Behavioral Scale - Cautela, 1977

B. Affect - A
   1. Principles
   2. Techniques/Exercises
      a. Fear Survey - Wolpe & Lang, 1969
      b. Social Anxiety Survey Schedule - Cautela, 1977

C. Sensory - S
   1. Principles
   2. Techniques/Exercises
      a. Stress Identification Scale, "Schedule of Recent Experiences" - Holmes & Rahe, 1967
      b. Stress Awareness Diary - Davis, Eshelman & McKay, 1980

D. Imagery - I
   1. Principles
   2. Techniques/Exercises
      a. Imagery Survey Schedule - Cautela, 1977
      b. Self Evaluation Scale - Cautela, 1981

E. Cognitive - C
   1. Principles
   2. Techniques/Exercises
      Beliefs Inventory - Davis, Eshelman & McKay, 1980

F. Interpersonal - I
   1. Principles
   2. Techniques/Exercises
      a. Social Interaction Survey Schedule - Cautela, 1981
      b. Assertiveness Questionnaire - Davis, Eshelman & McKay, 1980

G. Drugs - D
   1. Principles
   2. Techniques/Exercises
      a. Organic Dysfunction Survey Schedule - Cautela, 1981
      b. Physical Complaint Survey Schedule - Cautela, 1981

V. Multimodal Self-Management Techniques

A. Behavior - B
Contingency Management
1. Principles/Steps
2. Exercise
a. Pinpointing (Watson & Tharp, 1981)
b. Functional analysis (Watson & Tharp, 1981)
c. Reinforcement Survey Schedule (Cautela, 1977)

B. Affect - A
Systematic Desensitization
1. Principles/Steps
2. Exercise
a. Relaxation training (Davis, Eshelman & McKay, 1980)
b. Hierarchy construction (Davis, Eshelman & McKay, 1980)

C. Sensory - S
Biofeedback
1. Principles/Steps
2. Exercise
a. Autogenic training (Davis, Eshelman & McKay, 1980)
b. Brain synchronizing and aggressive imagery (Lazarus, 1978)

D. Imagery - I
Guided Imagery
1. Principles/Steps
2. Exercise
a. Guided imagery (Davis, Eshelman & McKay, 1980)
b. Goal rehearsal, positive imagery, idealized self-image (Lazarus, 1978)

E. Cognitive - C
RET
1. Principles/Steps
2. Exercise
a. Rational disputation (Dyer, 1976)
b. Thought stopping (Davis, Eshelman & McKay, 1980)

F. Interpersonal - I
Assertiveness Training
1. Principles/Steps
2. Exercise
a. Designs for replacing anger (Dyer, 1976)
b. Assertive body language and assertive speech (Dyer, 1976; Davis, Eshelman & McKay, 1980)

G. Drugs - D
Physical Conditioning
1. Principles/Steps
2. Exercise
a. Exercise Guide (Mahoney, 1983)
b. Exercise behavior (Watson & Tharp, 1981)

IV. Recap and Conclusions
1. Troubleshooting the System
2. How to Find Help

Course Requirements:

1. Readings: Davis, M., Eshelman, E. & McKay, M. The Relaxation and stress reduction workbook. Richmond, CA: New Harbinger Publications, 1980.

Dyer, W. Your erroneous zones. New York: Avon Books, 1976.

Watson, D. & Tharp, R. Self-directed behavior (3d ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1981.

2. Self-Management Project for Students

3. Class Presentation of Project

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